



HOME MADE RUGS

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Contents

Factors to consider before making a rug	4
Design	5
Shape and size	5
Decorative or surface design.	6
Texture	6
Color	7
General directions for making rugs and mats	7
Selection of fabric	7
Preparation of fabric	8
Braided rugs	9
Equipment	9
Planning the design	9
Construction	10
Crocheted rugs	13
Equipment	13
Planning the design	13
Construction	13
Hooked rugs	15
Equipment	15
Planning the design	16
Selection and preparation of the fabric.	17
Hooking	19
Finishing the hooked rug	19
Woven rugs	21
Equipment	21
Planning the design.	21
Construction	22
Directions for making mats.	22
Care of rugs and mats.	23

“The painting on a pot and the pattern in a rug . . . add nothing to their utility, but these are the elements that make them works of art.”—*Ernst Jonson.*

HOME MADE RUGS

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WHEN ONE searches history for information about the beginning of rug making, no definite date can be ascertained. In the Egyptian tombs of 2400 B. C. there are wall paintings picturing women at looms, weaving rugs and carpets, as well as other articles. The early historians, Homer, Ovid, Pliny, and Josephus, mention rugs as furnishings of the homes of their times.

Rug making is a subject filled with romance and conjecture. No doubt the primitive woman made blankets and rugs of whatever material she had

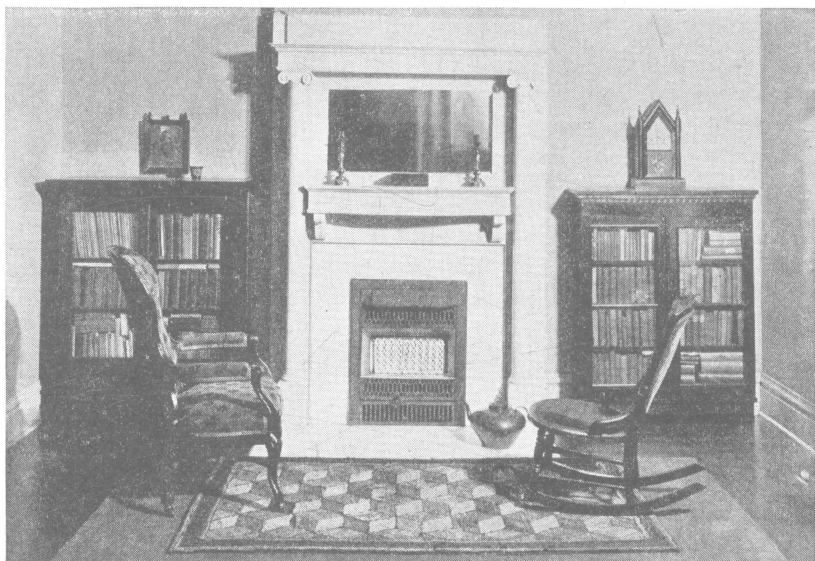


Fig. 1.—A home made rug is placed in front of the fireplace to emphasize it.

at hand. She made an effort to give her family something better than hides and leaves for bedding and floor coverings, and for clothing.

In America, rug making was developed by the need of protection from the elements. Such articles as carpets and thick comforts were used to hang over the doors and windows to keep out strong wind. Coverings were needed on the floors for warmth. Undoubtedly the pioneers who made and used rugs had more comfort than the earlier settlers who had no floor coverings. Recent writers who have given attention to the subject of hooked rugs state that in America such rugs were first made and used in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The braided and crocheted rugs, being more simple,

probably were made many years before that, while woven rugs were made still earlier. Some of the early rugs are in existence today.

The early Americans enjoyed color about them much as people do now, but there was less opportunity to use color in their houses than in those of today. The home made rug was perhaps the only floor covering available, and the pioneers expressed their love of color by using it in the rugs they made. They gathered the leaves, roots, and bark of shrubs and trees, which they used for dyes to produce fast and beautiful colors.

The designs for their rugs were taken from the objects which they saw about them. Leaves and flowers were favorite designs. The red rose was used frequently. Animals, many of which were so crude in shape that they could scarcely be recognized, formed rug designs. Abstract designs such as diamond shapes, circles, or rope shaped designs were worked into the early rugs.

The rigid economy of our foremothers caused them to utilize scraps of new fabric and the usable parts of worn clothing and blankets in the making of useful rugs. These were made at little or no cost except in the use of time and energy.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER BEFORE MAKING A RUG

Today, there are many homes which are being kept comfortable and attractive by the handicraft of members of the family with little expenditure of money. Among the articles being made at home are many beautiful rugs. In deciding whether or not to make rugs at home, it is necessary to consider the time, energy, and skill required for construction, any cost involved in connection with equipment and materials, the service and satisfaction which the rugs will probably give, and the kind of cleaning involved in the care of the rugs.

The way in which time and energy are to be used is perhaps the most important consideration. For many workers there is pleasant recreation in the making of a rug. Others may be so pressed with work, that using for complete rest any available time, contributes more to their well being and to the happiness of their families than would the making of rugs. Before making a decision any worker needs to ask herself the question, "Do I have the time and energy available for making a rug?"

Perhaps the time is available, but is limited. In that case the worker may be guided by her skill and experience in deciding which type of rug she will make; the hooked rug, for example, requires more time for its construction than any other home made rug of the same size, while the woven rug calls for a greater degree of skill.

The materials for making a rug at home include ordinary sewing supplies and fabric that may be available in discarded clothing and other articles. Since all kinds of fabric are not equally satisfactory for all types of home made rugs, the kind of fabric available is one consideration in deciding which type or rug is to be made. Equipment available has also some influence in making a choice. Inexpensive, home made equipment is all that is needed for making

braided, crocheted, and hooked rugs. Looms now used in making woven rugs are usually commercial products. Most equipment, if used carefully, is sturdy enough to be used repeatedly.

The quality of workmanship has much to do with the beauty and serviceability of any home made rug. Only such rugs as are well designed, made from suitable fabrics, firmly and durably constructed, and heavy enough to remain in place on the floor, are worth the making. The surface of the finished rug should be flat and free from raw edges or ravelings. If sewing has been done, the seams or stitches should be small, neatly made and invisible, or nearly so, and firmly fastened; the thread used in sewing should be durable and similar in color to the fabric of the rug. The loops, braids, or crochet stitches should be close, firm, and uniform in size. In the pages that follow, suggestions are given to help the worker plan and construct at home, rugs which are worthy of the time, effort and money expended.

DESIGN

Rugs are used primarily to give resiliency to the floor and beauty to the surroundings. Throughout the process of planning and making rugs, their intended use should be kept in mind. The home made rug should be resilient, and the size, shape, color, and surface design should be planned in relation to the character of the room in which the rug is to be used and to the other furnishings in the room. Especially should the rug harmonize with any other floor coverings already in use.

SHAPE AND SIZE

A rug appears at its best when its shape corresponds to the shape of the space it occupies. An oval or rectangular rug is in harmony with a rectangular floor space. Where small rugs are desirable, oval rugs usually fit the spaces better than round ones, and rectangular rugs are more usable than square ones. A rectangular or oval rug is most beautiful when the difference between its length and breadth is great enough to give an interesting variety in the length of its lines. A rug which is too long or too short for its breadth lacks harmony in its lines and is displeasing in appearance. A rectangle having its sides in the relationship of two units in width to three in length, or three units in width to five in length, is always beautiful in proportion.

In addition to being suitable in shape, rugs should be suitable in size to the spaces they occupy. For example, a rug to be laid before the fireplace or davenport should be approximately the length of the hearth or davenport. A small rug may be desirable in the small space in front of a chair or table. The use of many small rugs in any one room gives the floor a "spotty" effect which should be avoided. It is sometimes advantageous to use a comparatively large rug rather than several small ones. A rug which fits the floor space may appear to unify several pieces of furniture grouped near it.

In planning for the size and shape of rugs, it is wise to consider the best way to arrange them. The arrangement of rugs appears most orderly when

their lines follow the lines of the walls. Rugs create a fairly dizzy feeling when placed at various angles to each other and to the walls.

DECORATIVE OR SURFACE DESIGN

The surface or decorative design of a rug is determined by the choice and arrangement of lines, shapes, colors, and textures used in it. The shapes may be conventional adaptations of objects found in nature such as leaves and flowers, or arrangements of such simple geometric figures as squares, circles, and lines. Realistic animal and plant forms are undesirable. Only such designs as appear flat are suitable for rugs.

The shapes forming the surface or decorative design should be arranged close enough together so that the surface does not appear spotty. Frequently

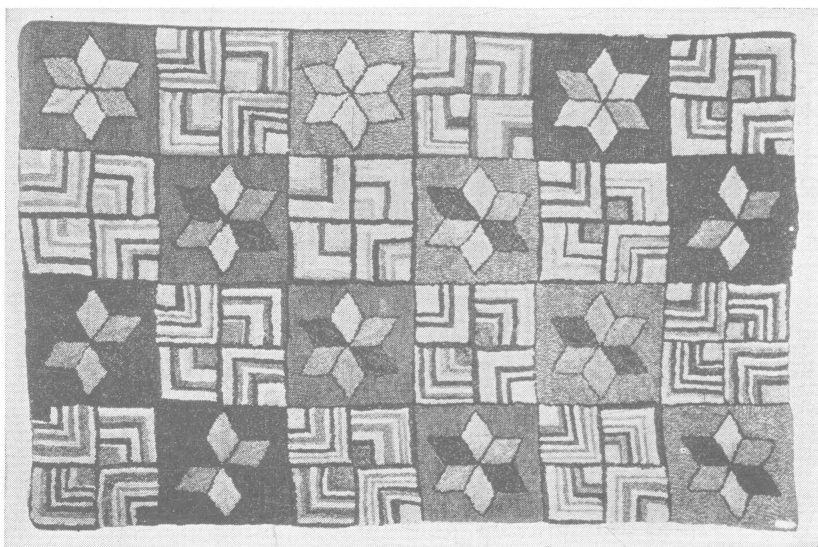


Fig. 2—The lines and shapes in this hooked rug are arranged to make a geometric design.

borders are necessary to unify the stripes or other shapes in the design of rugs. The width of the border should be in proportion to the size and shape of a rug, so that attention is not drawn too much to the border. A confusion results from placing too many different designs on the floor in the same room, or one type of decorative design over another. Small rugs to be placed on a figured carpet or other floor covering should be plain or similar in design to the large floor covering. In some rooms, rugs having little or no surface design may be used most effectively.

TEXTURE

The texture of home made rugs limits their use to rooms in which the other furnishings are somewhat sturdy in type. Rooms of the Early Amer-

ican period as well as many rooms of modern design express the sturdiness characterized by the home made rug. The texture of braided, crocheted, and home woven rugs is more or less coarse, but hooked rugs have a somewhat finer textured surface.

COLOR

The color of a rug should be in harmony with the entire color scheme of a room. In a well planned room, the color value of the floor covering has a definite relationship to the color value of the walls, the floor being darker than the walls, and the ceiling lighter. The color which predominates in a rug should harmonize with or have a close relationship to the color of the surface on which the rug is to be placed.

The soft, rich colors which are in many old rugs are much admired. Neutral colors such as tans, browns, and grays and such soft colors as dull greens, dull blues, or dull reds attract less attention than brilliant ones, and therefore are usually desirable for the larger areas in a rug. Brighter colors in smaller amounts often make pleasing accents.

The entire surface of a rug should appear as a unit. Unity may be brought about by choice of colors and by the way they are arranged. Pleasing color combinations may be made by arranging together colors of the same intensity—that is, colors which are about equally grayed. Beautiful effects may also be secured by combining colors having about the same value, that is, the same amount of white in them.

Occasionally several very bright colors may be brought together harmoniously by using black or a neutral color with them. Designs are sometimes outlined with a dark color to make them more distinct. Black is often used in this way. Surface designs are softer and less conspicuous when the shapes are not outlined by strong contrasting colors.

A careful and critical study of the proportions and combinations of colors in rugs and pictures may be helpful in learning to recognize beautiful color harmonies.



GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING RUGS AND MATS

SELECTION OF FABRIC

Wool, cotton, silk, and linen fabrics may be used for making home made rugs. Any fabric to be used should be heavy enough so that the rug made from it will lie flat on the floor. Wool fabric is preferable to any other, because a rug made of wool tends to be soft and resilient, and to be heavy enough to remain in place on the floor. Heavy cotton or linen fabrics, if durable and color fast, may be used, but pack down and lack the softness of wool. There is generally more wear in an old woolen garment than in an old cotton one, provided that the qualities of the fabrics are similar. Silk is not recommended, except as it is used to give contrast in texture in the hooked rug. Silk may be used advantageously for making small mats, when fine and beautiful texture are more desired than durability. As a rule, it is

recommended that throughout any one rug the fabric used be of the same type. Whether the fabrics selected are of the same type or not, it is important that they have equal wearing quality.

When worn garments or articles are to be used, all badly worn parts should be discarded. Otherwise the part of the rug in which they appear will soon wear out, while the rest of the rug is in good condition. Poor quality of rug material will give poor return for the labor of making.

Wool.—Very heavy wool fabrics from such articles as blankets and chinchilla coats, are suitable for braided rugs only. Lighter weight woven and knitted wool fabrics, which are firmly constructed, are pleasing in hooked, braided, or crocheted rugs.

Cotton and Linen.—If no wool fabrics are available, such cotton fabrics as denim and heavy shirting, as well as that found in heavy knitted bathing suits and underwear, may be used with pleasing effect in braided, crocheted, or woven rugs. Heavy linen fabrics may be used in a similar way. Very heavy cotton fabric, such as corduroy, is suitable for braided rugs. Medium and light weight cotton fabrics such as gingham, sheeting, and that found in ordinary cotton hose and underwear or medium and light weight linen fabrics are more desirable for crocheted rugs, but those which ravel easily should be avoided.

Braided and hooked rugs may be made from burlap sacks. However, if burlap is to be used for the loops in hooked rugs, it must be raveled out and the ravelings used as yarn. If desired, burlap may be dyed, though it does not hold the color well. In case it is to be dyed for use as loops in a hooked rug, dye the burlap before raveling it.

Silk.—Silk may be used most satisfactorily for making small mats for tables and chair seats. In these, silk hose, silk neckties, and pieces of other silk fabrics, new or old, may be utilized. Fabric for mats need not have as good wearing quality as fabrics for rugs. If silk fabric is to be used for making all or part of a rug, select the silk for durability. If to be used in making an entire rug, the durability factor should be considered in relation to the time required for construction of the rug and the service which such a rug will give.

PREPARATION OF FABRIC

Cleaning.—See that any fabric to be used in making a rug is clean. Used articles generally need thorough washing.

Dyeing.—If the fabric available is not of the desired color, and is to be dyed, care should be taken in the dyeing. Fabrics should be dyed with fast dyes in order to secure satisfactory colors that will give good service. Select a standard quality dye, and follow the directions given.

Cutting.—All fabric to be used in making the home made rug is cut or torn into even strips. The fabric is usually cut or torn on the thread, or the straight of the goods. Wiry fabrics, such as wool serge or twill, to be used in making hooked rugs, are cut on the bias, to prevent fraying and raveling. Silk hose may be cut lengthwise or around and around. The strips

stretch out and the cut edges curl in, forming a smooth strand. Silk hose cut lengthwise make short strands, but stretch less than when cut around and around. Thin spots caused by runners may be discarded when the hose are cut lengthwise. Strips cut lengthwise that curl with the right side out, have a glossy surface, and those cut around and around that curl with the wrong side out, have a dull surface.

The weight of the fabric, and the kind of rug to be made, are the guiding factors in deciding on the width of strips to be cut. As a general rule, the lighter fabric is cut into wider strips. If fabrics of different weights are being used in the same rug, vary the width of the strips in such a way as to make the strands uniform in thickness. Cut strips of several widths from the different fabrics to be used. Using the desired type of construction, experiment with these strips until the width of strip is determined which gives the most pleasing and satisfactory appearance of the braids, crochet stitches, or hooked loops.

Construction.—The construction of different types of home made rugs and mats varies greatly. Specific directions for the making of braided, crocheted, hooked, and woven rugs and mats are given in the pages that follow (pages 9 to 22).

Pressing.—The home made rug or mat should be finished by careful pressing. Lay the rug or mat on a well padded surface, with the wrong side up, stretching it and fastening it if necessary to hold it in proper shape. On the rug or mat place a damp pressing cloth, and over this a dry one. Press with a moderately hot iron until steam ceases to appear. Remove the pressing cloths, turn the rug or mat right side up, and allow it to lie flat until thoroughly dry.



BRAIDED RUGS

EQUIPMENT

Very simple equipment may be used in the making of a braided rug. A spool of cotton thread (No. 8) or some fine carpet warp, to match the prevailing color of the rug, large needles (No. 2), a good pair of shears, a thimble, beeswax, a tape measure, and a table and chair of comfortable height are the items needed.

PLANNING THE DESIGN

The design (see "Design," page 5) of a braided rug is made by the use and placement of color in the braids, and the proportions of the different colored bands or zones of the rug. Beautiful designs for braided rugs may be developed by making a pleasing variation in the widths of the different bands and by a harmonious arrangement of the color masses. The different colors of the bands in any one rug should appear to be related to each other, and the change of color in the bands should be gradual. The braiding of two or more colors together forms what is called a hit-or-miss effect, which may make a desirable distribution of color. Such braids may be used for all or part of the rug.



Fig. 3.—The simple braided rug is attractive with Early American furniture.

Width of Strips and Braids. — Fabric should be cut into even strips, from 1 to 3 inches in width (see "Cutting," page 8). The width desirable depends on the weight of the fabric and the number of strands to be used in the braid. An attractive and easily handled braid is from $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch in width. The same width of braids should be used throughout the entire rug. The use of braids of different widths makes an unattractive rug, unless skillfully handled.

In order to decide on the width of strips for a rug, cut from the

fabric which is to be used, a few strips of various widths. Try braiding them, and select the most pleasing width. Narrow braids are difficult to sew together, and may make a light rug that will not stay in place on the floor. Very wide braids tend to be coarse, and make a rug crude in appearance.

Folding Strips.—The cut edges of strips of light and medium weight fabrics are folded to the center; then the strip is folded through the center lengthwise, so that there are four thicknesses of fabric in the strand and no raw edges are visible. Strips of very light fabric may be folded in the same fashion, and then refolded several times, until they make a strand as firm and thick as desired. Strips of extremely heavy fabric from such articles as blankets and wool coats may be folded just once (leaving the two raw edges showing), if the fabrics do not ravel easily. When these heavy fabrics are wiry, and do not stay folded, the two raw edges may be stitched together on the sewing

machine. Folds which do not stay easily in place may be basted or pressed. As each strand is prepared, wrap it around a heavy cardboard, wrapping each color separately. For braided rugs the strips are joined as needed during the braiding. They are not previously sewed together as for crocheted and woven rugs.

Braiding and Joining Strands.—Three strands are easiest to braid and sew into a rug, but any number from three to twelve may be used. With fabrics of medium weight, from three to five strands are satisfactory. Begin braiding with strands of different lengths, so that no two joinings will come at the same place. All braiding must be even and firm.

To braid with three strands, fasten the three ends securely together, and pin to some heavy object, in order that the strands may be held taut while braiding. Bring the left strand over the adjoining one, and hold in place. Bring the right over the adjoining one, and hold in place. Continue to braid, turning each strand at an angle on the edge of the braid. The work must be neat and exact. Keep every strand folded flat and smooth, with no raw edges showing.

To braid with five strands, fasten the five ends securely to some heavy object. Figure No. 4 represents a loosely woven section of braid, showing how the weaving is done with five strands; actual braiding for rugs should be close and firm, with no open spaces between the strands, such as are shown in the figure.

Using the right hand strand, weave it under the second, over the third, under the fourth, over the fifth. Using the second strand, which is now the right hand strand, weave it under the third, over the fourth, under the fifth, over the first. Continue in the same manner, weaving each time with the strand at the right of the weaving.

When the shortest strand has been braided to within 4 or 5 inches of the end, join a new strand as follows. The seam is to be made on the straight or on the bias, as may be best for the fabric being used. Open the folds at the ends of the strands to be joined, and make the seam where it will be covered by another strand in braiding, cutting off the end of the used strand if necessary. The principal requirements in joining strands are to have flat, inconspicuous, permanent joinings, which will show as little as possible in the finished rug. Continue

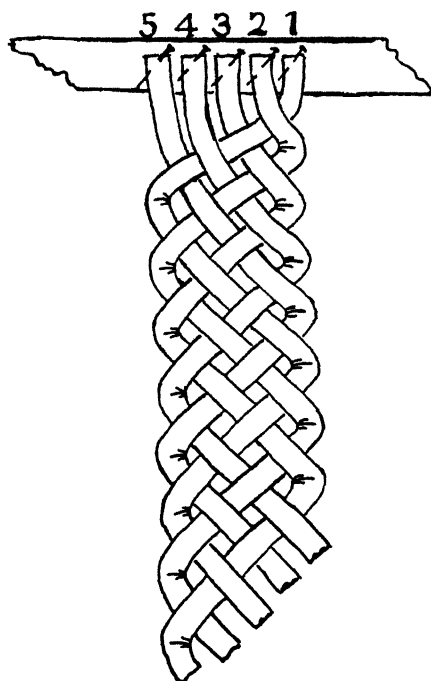


Fig. 4.—Braiding with five strands.

to join new strands as needed. When a few yards of braid have been made, begin the shaping of the rug.

Shaping and Sewing the Rug.—The shaping or sewing of a braided rug, whether round or oval, is begun at the center. The work is done on a flat surface such as a table, so that the weight of the braids will not pull the unfinished rug out of shape.

To start shaping a round rug, make a flat, circular loop as small as possible, near the beginning of the braid, leaving just enough to turn under. Sew the end inconspicuously and firmly in place. The braid is to be shaped around this center, being held flat and loose enough not to cup; the braids are then to be sewed together.

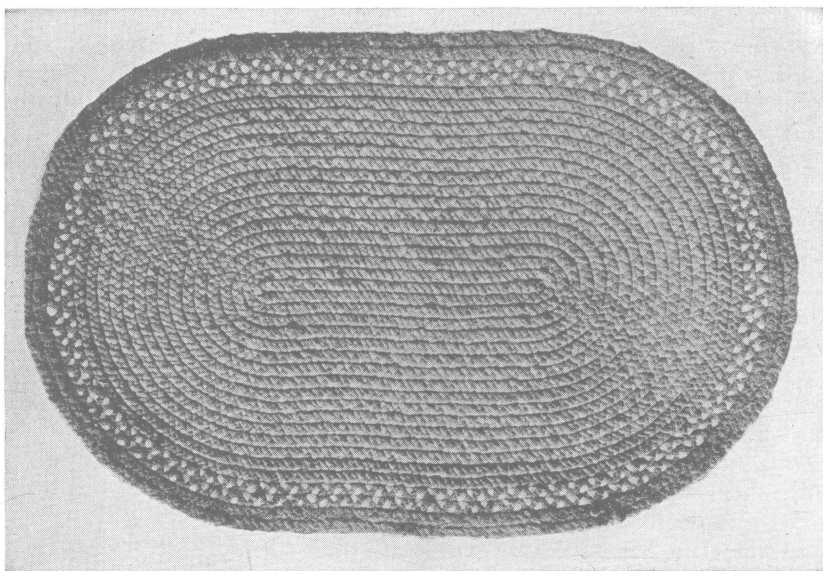


Fig. 5.—Braided rugs should be heavy enough to lie flat on the floor.

To begin an oval rug, start with the beginning of the braid, and leaving just enough to turn under, measure a distance on a strip of braid as long as the difference between the desired length and width of the finished rug. This measured distance is used as the braid for the center of the rug. For example, a rug to be 18 by 30 inches should be started with a braid 12 inches long, which is to form the center braid of the rug. At the end of the measured length the braid is to be shaped in a flat turn and sewed to the center strip. The braid is to be shaped around this straight piece, and to be held loosely at the ends of the oval to avoid cupping. The braids are then to be sewed together.

Braided rugs may be sewed either with the slip stitch or with the overhand stitch. The heavy cotton thread or carpet warp needs to be waxed to prevent tangling. Braids should be held closely together and sewed firmly

so that no open spaces show in the rug. As the occasional ripping or pulling apart of the braids of a rug is very objectionable, they must be sewed to hold.

Rugs sewed with a slip stitch are reversible, since the stitches are invisible on either side. To use a slip stitch, sew alternately through a strand on the edge of one braid and a strand on the edge of the adjoining braid, taking care not to leave any open space. Draw the stitches firmly, but not too tightly, making them small and close together. Reinforce the sewing at intervals by taking one stitch over another.

Braided rugs may be sewed firmly and securely by overhanding, and this method is thought by some workers to be preferable, even though the stitches show plainly on one side. Sew the braids together by overhanding the edges closely together so that no open spaces show between them.

Changing the Colors and Finishing the Rug.—To introduce a different color for a complete band or zone of a braided rug, each braid may be cut and joined at the completion of a row. The joining of rows completed in this way, should be distributed around the rug. To join the ends of the braids, allow enough of each strand to sew it invisibly to a corresponding strand of the opposite end of the braid.

If there is very little contrast in the colors to be used, the braids may be continuous in the entire rug, and sewed in spiral fashion. If strands of different colors are to be used in an oval rug, the colors are best changed at the turn of the oval. End the rug at the turn of the oval, gradually narrowing the braid to make a smooth finish. Fold the raw edges of the strands under and sew firmly in place.



CROCHETED RUGS

EQUIPMENT

To make a crocheted rug, a large crochet hook of bone, wood, or steel is required. A pair of good shears, a tape measure, a thimble, needles (No. 7), and thread (No. 50), to match the color of the fabric to be used in the rug are also needed.

PLANNING THE DESIGN

The problem of the design (see "Design," page 5) for the crocheted rug is the same as for the braided one. The arrangement of the lights and darks and the selection of colors determine largely the beauty of the rug.

CONSTRUCTION

Preparation of the Strand.—Cut the fabric into strips $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch wide, according to the weight and stretching quality of the fabric (see "Cutting," page 8). Join the strips by lapping the end of one strip over the end of another, and sewing securely. This sewing may be done on the sewing machine or by hand. After the strips are sewed, wind them into a ball as for "carpet rags." If desired, make a separate ball of each color to be used.

Crocheting.—Turning in the raw edges of the strand as the work progresses, gives a smooth appearance to the surface of the rug. To begin the making of a round rug, crochet three chain stitches, and in the first stitch make seven single crochet stitches. Single crochet around and around this center, increasing the number of stitches to keep the rug flat and give it the desired shape when finished. Fifty rows of crocheting make a rug from 36 to 50 inches in diameter, using a strand of fabric of average weight.

To make an oval rug, start with a crocheted chain of the same length as described for the beginning of oval braided rugs (see page 12). Single crochet the full length of the chain. Crochet around the end, increasing the

number of stitches at the turn to make the rug lie flat. Crochet down the other side of the chain, again increase the number of stitches at the curve, and continue to crochet around the oval.

On the first ten or twelve rows the number of stitches is increased from two to four at each curve of the oval. Occasionally an extra stitch is added on the sides.

As the rug grows larger the increase of stitches lessens and it may

be necessary to skip a stitch along the sides if the rug tends to become full.

If a smooth surface is desired, as it usually is, crochet through both loops. When the hook goes through only one loop of the edge, a ridge is made that may give the finished rug a rough surface. The crocheting should be close and firm to make a serviceable rug. A heavy twine or strip of fabric may be carried along at the back of the rug and caught into each crochet stitch to give body to the rug. This will prevent any possibility of its being loose and sleazy.

The outside edge of the rug may be finished by overcasting with a strip of the fabric, using a bodkin to do the work.



Fig. 6.—A crocheted mat is useful and attractive on the table.

HOOKED RUGS

EQUIPMENT

Hook.—The equipment for making hooked rugs consists of a hook and a frame. An old-fashioned steel hook, about 6 inches long, and somewhat similar to a crochet hook, is recommended. The point of the hook should be sharper than that of a crochet hook; the shank should be larger, and should be set in a wooden handle that permits a comfortable grip. A hook may be made by filing the smaller end of a 10-penny nail to make a hook and setting the other end in a wooden handle. When using an old-fashioned hook, the worker sees the right side of the rug as she hooks.

There are on the market various patent needles for making hooked rugs, but in using them the worker sees the wrong side of the rug as she hooks. Patent needles, if used, must be carefully adjusted to make the length of the loops and the distance between them suitable. Otherwise the surface of the rug will not be satisfactory.

Frame.—A strong frame is necessary, as the burlap foundation for the hooked rug must be tightly stretched at all times during the process of hooking. Having the frame mounted on a rigid stand adds to the comfort of the worker. An excellent frame may be purchased, or a satisfactory one may be made or improvised at home. The most satisfactory frames are adjustable, so that rugs of different sizes may be made on any one frame (see Fig. 8). The width of the rug that may be made on an adjustable frame is limited by the longest part of the frame. But the length is not limited by any part of the frame, since the ends of a rug may be rolled in much the same way that a quilt in rolled on a quilting frame.

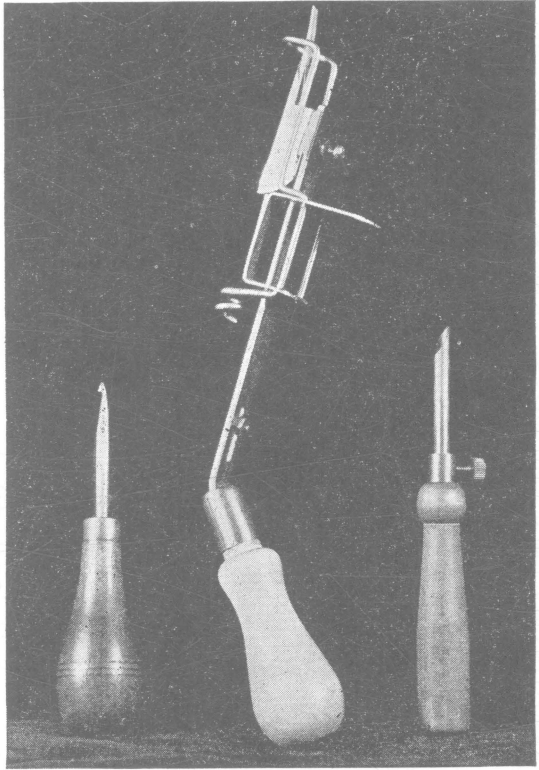


Fig. 7—An old-fashioned steel hook or a patent hook is needed to hook a rug.

To make a practical frame for an average sized rug, use four pieces of light wood, each about 2 inches wide and 1 inch thick. The end pieces should be at least 27 inches long; the side pieces should be at least 4 feet long. These pieces may be put together and clamped at the corners just as a quilting frame is held together.

A discarded picture frame, if it is strongly made, makes a good frame for hooking rugs, but is not adjustable.

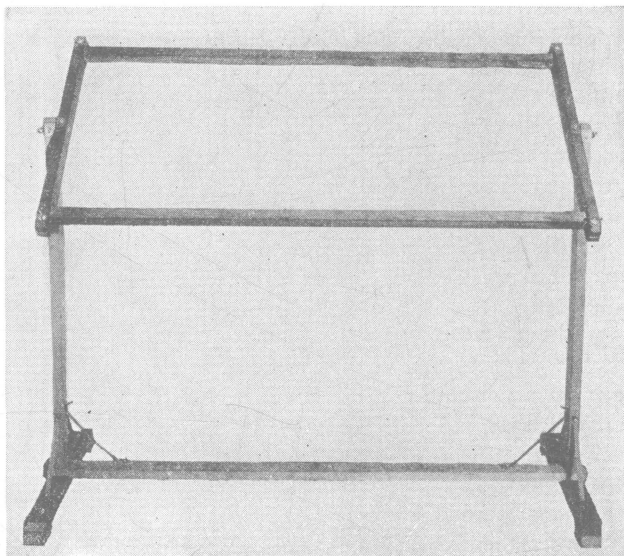


Fig. 8.—The most satisfactory frame on which to hook a rug is adjustable.

PLANNING THE DESIGN

The hooked rug may be the most artistic of all the home made rugs (see "design," Page 5). The rug is satisfying if the design and workmanship are good. There is a joy in creating a beautiful hooked rug that the person who purchases a ready made rug fails to experience.

The worker may draw original designs to meet her needs, or may modify other designs such as were used in early New England rugs. The old-fashioned designs, such as "log cabin," "double cable," quaint flower blocks combined with "nine patch" or "log cabin blocks," nosegays of flowers in blocks of diamond formation, designs adapted from old patchwork quilts, are all authentic New England designs.

In the design of the hooked rug, imagination may have free play. However, realistic animal and flower designs are to be avoided. If animal or flower designs are desired, conventionalize them, or adapt them to the flat surface of a rug. A simple geometric design may be very pleasing in effect.

SELECTION AND PREPARATION OF THE FABRIC

Fabric for the Foundation and for Hooking.—A firm fabric should be used as a foundation for a hooked rug (see "Selection of Fabric," page 7). Closely woven new burlap is satisfactory and durable. Old burlap may be used if it is in good condition. Usually the burlap in sacks is too loosely woven, the mesh being too open to hold the loops tightly.

The kind and number of fabrics suitable for the loops of hooked rugs differ somewhat from the fabrics used for braided and crocheted rugs. Somewhat loosely woven and light weight knitted fabrics may be used as well as those of firmer or heavier construction. A variety of different weaves of the same fiber, and even of different fibers, gives an interesting texture and

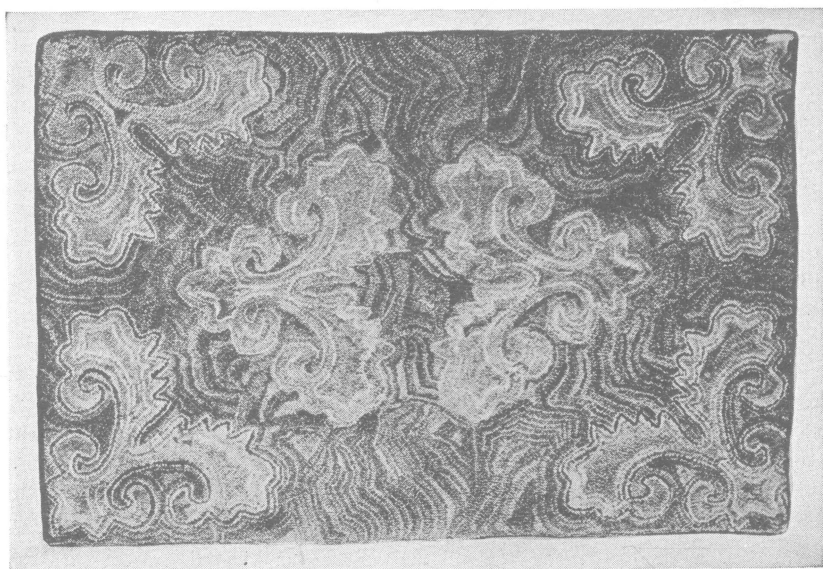


Fig. 9.—The marble or water design in the early hooked rugs was made by hooking various colors in short, irregular lines.

very pleasing effect. Avoid fabrics which ravel too easily. Yarn, when used in the same rug with strips of woven or knitted fabric, may be used in as many ply as are needed to make a strand of the same weight as the fabric strand being used.

Drawing the Design on the Burlap.—The worker who plans her own rug, usually prefers to draw the design on paper first, to be sure it is beautiful and is the size and shape desired. She then transfers the design from the paper to the burlap. Simple designs may be drawn directly on the burlap if desired. In transferring or drawing, keep the straight edge of the pattern in line with the thread of the foundation fabric so that the design will be accurate.

To transfer a design from the paper to the foundation burlap, lay a piece of heavy pencil carbon paper on the burlap. Place the paper design on top of the carbon paper and use the blunt end of a bone or steel crochet hook to trace the design. A pencil would be likely to cut into the paper and destroy the outline of the pattern.

Allow at least 4 inches of burlap as a margin beyond the rug pattern when tracing it on the foundation. This margin will enable the worker to fasten the burlap securely into the frame without tearing or injuring that part which is needed to form the hem on the finished rug.

After the pattern is drawn or traced on the burlap foundation, fill in the design with color, using crayons, water color, or dye. The wax from the crayons will sink into the burlap if a hot iron to melt the wax is placed on the design.

Fastening the Burlap on the Frame.—After the design or pattern is marked on the burlap, it is ready to be fastened in the frame. The burlap may be tacked to the frame, or it may be sewed to the strip of denim or ticking which has been tacked to the inner edges of the frame. Care must be taken in fastening the burlap to the frame, for if not fastened straight the finished rug will be crooked, and cannot be straightened. Before fastening the burlap foundation to the frame, clamp or screw the frame together at the corners. To fasten the burlap for a rug no larger than the frame, stretch the burlap flat and attach it securely on all four sides.

For any rug which is to be larger than can be stretched in this fashion, fasten one end of the burlap to one side of the frame, and the other end of the burlap to the opposite side. Then unclamp or unscrew the frame, and roll the burlap on one side piece of the frame, just as a quilt is rolled on a quilting frame. Replace the clamps or screws, stretching the burlap tightly in place. Then fasten the other two sides of the burlap smoothly to the frame. When the hooking has been completed in the part of the burlap which is stretched flat on the frame, the sides of this part are to be unfastened, the frame unscrewed or unclamped, and the hooked section rolled on the piece of frame to which the end is attached. Then another section of burlap is to be unrolled and fastened in place. As the work progresses, sections are to be fastened and hooked one at a time, one end being rolled and the other unrolled as necessary.

Cutting the Strips.—Cut the fabric to be used for the loops into strips varying from $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to 1 inch in width according to the weight (see "Cutting," page 8). Jersey may be cut about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide, while heavier fabric may be cut narrower, and thinner fabric wider. The only way to determine the width is to try strips of different widths, until a width is found that pulls through the burlap foundation easily, and yet is wide enough to be durable and give the desired effect. When strips are cut too wide, the surface of the rug is coarse and open. Cut as many strips of fabric at one time as are desired, but do not sew the strips together.

It will be found convenient to keep the different colors separated; large paper bags are useful for this purpose.

HOOKING

Place the frame in a convenient position and sit comfortably before it. Work from the outside edge of the pattern toward the center. Hook the outline of the design first, in order to retain all the distinctness of line. Then fill in the background.

If using an old-fashioned hook, hold the hook in the right hand and hold a strip of fabric close to the underside of the burlap with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand. Insert the hook through the mesh of the burlap, drawing up one end of the strip until it is about 1 inch long. Next to this draw up a loop about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in height. Continue to draw up loops, placing them in every second or third space between the threads of the burlap. The loops should be placed close enough to each other that they will not easily

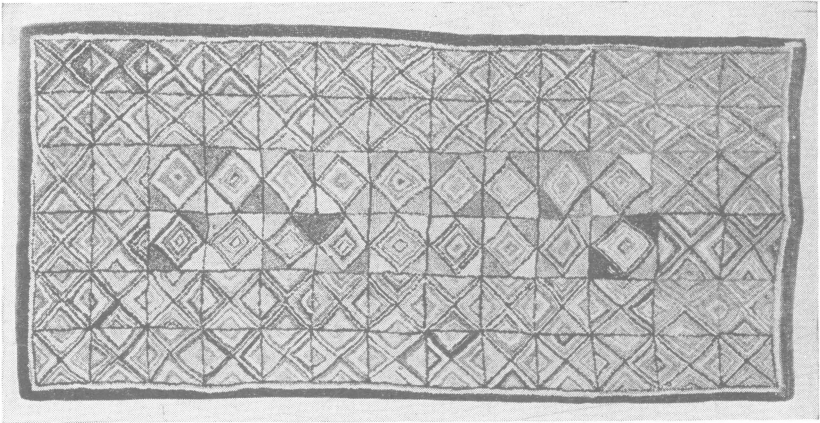


Fig. 10.—A design which is flat and covers the surface completely is desirable for a hooked rug. There is little contrast of dark and light in this rug.

pull out. The surface of the burlap should be entirely covered with loops, and yet the rug should remain somewhat flexible. If the loops are too close together, the rug will be hard and will tend to bulge.

When the hooking of any one strip of fabric is completed, draw the end through the right side, leaving the end somewhat longer than the loops. These ends are to be clipped later and help to give a pleasing effect, which may be made even more pleasing by allowing a loop every 2 or 3 inches to be high enough for clipping. Look at the wrong side occasionally to see that the space is being filled, and that the weave is compact and smooth.

FINISHING THE HOOKED RUG

Clipping.—When the hooking is completed, remove the rug from the frame. Clip high loops and ends to within $\frac{3}{8}$ inch from the foundation. Some workers clip or shear all the loops, but rugs wear better and appear more like the old-fashioned ones if this is not done.

Lining.—The rug may be finished either with or without a lining. The use of a lining is recommended, as it protects the under surface of the rug. When no lining is used the loops may be readily pulled out of place from the wrong side; and if there are any loose ends, the lining prevents them from being caught and pulled out.

If a lining is to be used, turn the extra inches of burlap to the wrong side, and sew in place without turning under the raw edge. The lining may be of sateen, denim, crash, or any firm fabric. Cut it about 2 inches longer and 2 inches wider than the rug. Turn the edge of the lining under, making the lining slightly loose on the burlap surface, to allow for the stretching of the rug. Pin the lining in place and hem it to the burlap close to the outside edge of the rug.

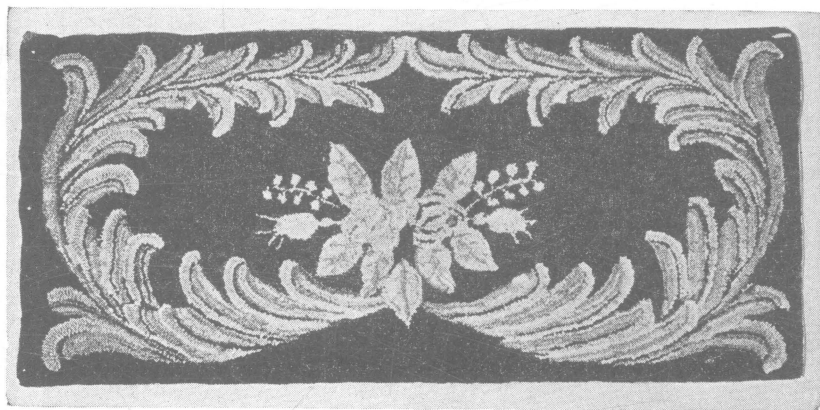


Fig. 11.—A medallion design should be equally beautiful from all directions.

Finishing the Edge of an Unlined Rug.—There are several ways of finishing the edge of the rug. The following is a simple and satisfactory method: turn the extra 4 inches of the burlap to the wrong side, and make a hem, sewing firmly with close, even hemming stitches. Use strong cotton thread.

Felt Border.—If desired, a quaint border of true colonial style may be added after the hem has been made. This border is made of light weight felt, and usually consists of several layers which harmonize with one or more of the prevailing colors in the rug. The layers are made of strips of felt of different widths. The strips may be of one color, or of different colors. The border should be considered as contributing to the design of the rug. Therefore, the color or colors should be chosen and the width of the strips planned in relation to the rug as a whole. The intensity or carrying quality of the color of each strip is to be considered in planning its width. A very bright color should be given the place of least prominence in a border of more than one layer of felt.

For a hooked rug of average size, an attractive border may be made of three strips of felt of the same color or of several colors of the same intensity and value. For example, to make a border of interesting proportions for a rug 27 by 45 inches, cut the felt for the first layer $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches in width, the second $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches, and the third 1 inch. Allow enough length for mitering the corners of the felt for a rectangular rug, or for easing in fullness if the rug is oval or round. The outer edges of the felt strips may be left plain or may be finished by pinking.

After the strips are cut, baste the two narrower strips together, with the inside edges even and the narrowest strip on top. Pin the inside edges to the edge of the rug and overhand firmly with strong cotton thread. Place the widest strip under the edge of the rug; these proportions allow for this felt strip to extend 1 inch under the rug. Overhand the strip firmly in place. This should make a flat, well finished border, which is neither clumsy nor bulky.

Sizing.—A hooked rug does not need sizing if it is left unclipped and is lined, as there is then little danger of loosening of the loops. If the rug is unlined, or if its surface is clipped, it is best to apply a sizing after the edge is finished. Sizing gives body to a rug, and also hold the loops more firmly in place.

Commercial sizing or a very thick boiled starch may be used. In using the commercial sizing, follow the directions given with it. In using a thick boiled starch, apply it cool. To apply the sizing, place the rug wrong side up on a flat, smooth surface. Stretch the rug to the proper shape and tack it in place. Rub the thick cool starch into the surface of the rug with the palm of the hand. Allow the rug to dry thoroughly, and then remove the tacks.



WOVEN RUGS

EQUIPMENT

A loom is required for the weaving of rugs. Since looms are somewhat complicated pieces of equipment, not readily improvised at home, commercially made ones are now ordinarily used. Looms are available in several sizes. The size of the loom limits the width of the rug which is to be made, but the length is not definitely limited, since the rug may be rolled on the loom as the work progresses.

PLANNING THE DESIGN

The surface design of a woven rug is usually developed by means of combination of stripes of different colors (see "Design," page 5). There may be crosswise stripes at or near the ends or at intervals throughout the rug. Lengthwise stripes, if desired, may be produced by the use of warp of different colors. A combination of crosswise and lengthwise stripes makes a block or

checkered effect. As a general rule, a more attractive arrangement is made by the use of an odd number rather than an even number of stripes, and stripes of varying widths may be combined to make a more pleasing design than stripes of uniform widths. Planning an interesting and beautiful variation in the width of the stripes and the distance between them is important in developing a pleasing rug.

Before planning combinations of colors in woven rugs, read "Color," page 7. The colors at the ends of a rug should be similar or closely related to the colors in the center or body of the rug in order to unify the design. The width of the border at the ends will depend on the length of the rug and the width and arrangement of the stripes in the rug.

CONSTRUCTION

Fabric.—Fabric for the filling and suitable thread for the warp are needed to make a woven rug. Tear or cut the fabric into strips $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 inch wide, the width depending upon the weight of the fabric (see "Cutting" page 8). The strips are sewed together with a flat seam, and wound into a ball. Each color to be used should be wound into a separate ball. Allow about 2 pounds of "carpet rags" weighed after sewing, to each square yard of rug.

Weave.—The workmanship in woven rugs is very important. The edges of the rug should be kept straight, and the "rags" beaten down tightly as the weaving progresses. The warp will then hold the fabric in place to make a firmly woven rug. It is necessary for the one who is to make the rug to have considerable knowledge and skill in operating the loom if a satisfactory rug is to be obtained.



DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING MATS

Small mats may be made in much the same fashion as are braided, crocheted, and hooked rugs. These mats may be very colorful and decorative in any room where a mat is needed under a lamp or vase, or as a pad in a chair.

Silk fabric that is not durable enough for rugs may be used. Silk stockings, neckties, silk blouses, or other silk garments are good sources of fabrics for mats. A variation of interest in the surface of the mat may be made by the placing and arrangement of lengthwise and around-and-around strips cut from silk hose (see "Cutting," page 8).

To give the effect of fine texture to the finished mat, the strips of fabric are cut much narrower than for rugs, and the construction is correspondingly finer. For example, braids are not usually more than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch wide, hooked loops are a little less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in height, and the stitches in crocheted rugs are correspondingly fine.

The foundation for hooked mats should be a firmly woven fabric, such as unbleached muslin or crash. The construction of mats is the same as that used in making rugs, as given on the preceding pages.

CARE OF RUGS AND MATS

Cleaning.—All home made rugs demand care in cleaning. They will stand ordinary sweeping with a soft broom, or one which is not too harsh, but will not endure vigorous treatment. They may be cleaned with a vacuum cleaner. Care should be taken that no part of a cleaner such as a protruding screw or piece of metal, snags or pulls the surface of the rug. The loops of the hooked rug may be pulled out of place easily. One rule that must be strictly enforced is this: *Never allow a home made rug to be shaken!* Shaking ruins a home made rug, because the weight of the rug pulls it apart. Mats should be given the same care in cleaning that is given to similar articles in the room, such as tapestries, draperies, and silk lamp shades.



Fig. 12.—A repaired spot in a hooked rug may be inconspicuous if the colors and designs are matched.

Washing.—In washing woolen rugs, they should be given the same care accorded any valued woolen article. Braided, woven, and crocheted rugs may be put into water with safety, if the fabric from which the rugs are made is washable and fast color. It is probably safer to have mats made of silk dry cleaned rather than to wash them, unless one is quite sure that all the silk used in the mat may be washed.

Hooked rugs should be cleaned on a "good drying day," if possible, and in a place where there is adequate air circulation. They may be cleaned as follows: Place the rug right side up on a flat, smooth surface. Use a stiff lather made from a pure, mild soap, and a small brush, or a soft cloth, such as an old Turkish towel. Dip the brush or cloth in the lather, and scrub or rub the surface of the rug gently until it is clean. Dip a cloth into clean

warm water, and wash off the soiled lather. Repeat the rinsing process until all soap is removed. Allow the rug to dry thoroughly before using it.

Repairing.—Any crocheted or braided rugs or mats in which loose ends of fabric appear, should be repaired immediately by firmly sewing down all ends. Rips in braided rugs and mats should be repaired by using the same method of sewing as that used in first sewing the braids together.

Loose ends and rips in the linings and border of hooked rugs should be repaired immediately. Mending may be done in the hooking so that it is scarcely noticeable if the workmanship is careful and exact. If the damage is great, it may take considerable time to make the repairs, and if the rug shows wear in several places, it may not be worth while to spend the time necessary for satisfactory mending.

If the value to the owner or the condition of the rug makes repairing desirable, it may be done as follows: Loosen or remove the lining as necessary, and if the foundation needs reinforcing or patching use burlap or fabric similar to that used originally in the rug. If necessary, cut away the worn parts, place a patch on the wrong side under the hole, and sew the edges down to the foundation fabric on the right side. Then fill in the patch by hooking in new loops of fabric, following the original pattern in line and color as nearly as possible. This requires skill in matching the fabric and in following the design. After the mending is completed, press the rug carefully on the wrong side (see "Pressing," page 9).

A woven rug or mat may be repaired by darning it with warp to match that used in the weaving.